



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

RESOURCE GUIDE: GENDER AND CONFLICT IN AFRICA FINAL



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This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Alice L. Morton and Jackie Vavra, Management Systems International

PHOTO

Women and men are ready to distribute the Constitution of Malawi in the vernacular Chichewa language.

RESOURCE GUIDE: GENDER AND CONFLICT IN AFRICA

FINAL



Management Systems International

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ACRONYMS

ACORD	Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
AMODEG	Association of Demobilized Soldiers
AMETRAMO	Association of Traditional Healers of Mozambique
AU	African Union
AWA	Advocacy for Women in Africa
AWCPD	African Women's Committee for Peace and Development
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CRCM	Community Reconciliation and Conflict Management Component
COSYLI	Conseil National des Organisations Syndicales Libres au Rwanda
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
FAS	Femmes Africa Sokidarité
FAWE	Forum of African Women Educationalists
FFEAP	Federation of African Women's Peace Networks
GARDO	Gajaak Relief and Development Organization
IFOR	International Fellowship of Reconciliation
IRC	International Refugee Committee
ISIS-WICCE	Isis—Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange
LSTC	Luawa Skills Training Center
MIGEPROFE	Ministry of Gender and Women in Development
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Independence of Angola
NAWOCOL	National Women's Commission in Liberia
NURC	National Unity and Reconciliation Commission
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OAU	Organization for Africa Unity
OMA	Organization of Angolan Women
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives
POP	People Oriented Planning

PROWA	Progressive Women's Association
PSTS	Post Stress Traumatic Syndrome Treatment Process
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SADC	South African Development Community
SSWC	Save Somali Women and Children
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WANEP	West African Network for Peace building
WAPI	West Africa Peace building Institute
WIPNET	Women in Peace building Network
WIT	Women in Transition
WPM	Women's Progressive Movement

INTRODUCTION

USAID AFR recognizes that policy is one of the main instruments for creating lasting changes. Therefore, the creation of a new and innovative gender policy with specific guidance on gender and conflict to guide AFR and influence its organizational culture and practices is vital. When equipped with the requisite skills and expertise on gender issues in conflict/post-conflict societies, AFR can more readily advance livelihoods and human rights to safe and conflict-free societies African women and men deserve.

Management Systems International, Inc. was given the following scope of work under the Africa Bureau Gender and Conflict Research Project to help attain this goal:

“...conduct state of the art research on Gender, Conflict and Peace-building in Africa. Document case studies of best practices and approaches to assessing the gendered dimensions of armed conflict, post-conflict societies, peace negotiations, and other related issues such as gender-based violence (war and post-war). Special focus on DDRR (disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and repatriation), HIV/AIDS, multi-sectoral approaches to conflict prevention...and rehabilitation in post conflict societies is desired. Participatory and regional approaches, as well as best practices of merging traditional and modern techniques of African conflict resolution should be documented, accent on women’s roles....”

Four draft documents reflect the results of the work conducted. **Gender and Conflict in Africa: An Annotated Bibliography** presents key print and on-line materials covering gendered dimensions and gender-focused analysis of conflict and peace building in Africa. **Gender and Conflict in Africa: Best Practices** discusses key elements of multi-sectoral approaches spanning the continuum from pre-crisis conflict resolution attempts and conflict avoidance strategies through many aspects of crisis and war, to the post-conflict and reintegration phase. It gives best practice examples for most African countries that have been characterized by crisis and post-crisis situations over the past 30 years. **Gender and Conflict in Africa: AFR Framework Gender Issues and Best Practice Examples** identifies key issues related to gendered social, cultural, economic and political relationships across the crisis continuum following the Bureau’s new Strategic Framework for Fragile States. It also presents best practice examples from a spectrum of countries in which USAID has a presence, or which it supports regionally, including many created and sustained by African actors. Finally, this **Gender and Conflict in Africa Resource Guide** revisits some key issues for policy makers, planners, programmers, stakeholders and partners referencing the other three documents and presenting an annotated list of key Web sites for consultation.

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RESOURCES ON GENDER AND CONFLICT IN AFRICA

The majority of citizens of African states and societies—women, children and men—have in no way been instigators of conflicts that turn into crises, or electors of governments that are predatory, fragile or failing. Yet, virtually all are affected by them, at best marginally, and at worst, fatally. Though they deal with often intractable problems, the on-line and print resources included here and in the Annotated Bibliography are a testament to the extraordinary acts of courage of women, children and men of these countries as well as those of their regions, and of members of the international community in the face of disastrous and sometimes horrifying events and their aftermaths.

UNDERSTANDING AFRICAN STATES AND SOCIETIES

Contemporary African states and societies are not only many, but quite varied. Many of them incorporate several ethnic groups, language groups, religious affiliations, and livelihood strategies. They have varying rural-urban population distributions, although urbanization is becoming more and more significant. They have varying natural resource endowments, some of which are only recently coming to light. They have inherited a variety of governance structures and legal systems from their former colonizers. Groups from the same societies living on each side of a national border may be subject, therefore, to widely differing governance, legal and administrative systems in the present day.

Generalizations about Africa and Africans are—and should always be—subject to close inspection. African societies, cultures and polities can be grouped along various continua. Ethnicity, religion, population size and density, ecological and environmental endowment and adaptation, gender relations, and political organization are only some of the variables that can and should be taken into consideration no matter what typology is being used

Before colonization, there were several successful and long-lived indigenous African states and kingdoms, as well as “small societies” structured in terms of kinship relationships with no head, but an acknowledged governance structure and set of customary laws and dispute resolution systems. African societies had and maintained belief systems, social structures and systems of rules that distinguished between members and non-members, though these boundaries were usually permeable under certain known types of situations. All African societies had governance systems that included positive and negative sanctions to maintain peace within the society, and to adjudicate inter- and intra-group conflicts. Ideologies and beliefs governing social, political and ritual roles of women and men, old and young, the ancestors and the living, differed from one society to the other, though many elements were shared across societies. In times of rapid social and political change, such as the early colonial periods, many societies responded by rigidifying these ideologies and identities and resisting through conflict, while others attempted to

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accommodate to change ritually—through millenarian and other movements and/or conversion—and politically, through inclusion of neighboring populations and colonial settlers within newly defined territorial boundaries. African social, political, cultural and religious systems neither were nor are now static; those that have survived were and are highly adaptive. Finally, even where conflict between and among African states and societies has been endemic or cyclical, until recently it has been rule-bounded.

See especially Turshen M and C. Twagiramariya (ed.), January 1998. *What Women do in War Time: Gender and Conflict in Africa*. Zed Books.

<http://www.siyanda.org/search/summary.cfm?nn=1101&ST=SS&Keywords=conflict%20%26%20africa&SUBJECT=0&Donor=0&StartRow=1&Ref=Sim>

AFRICAN SOCIETIES AND CONFLICT

It is also difficult to derive simple typologies of African societies that are moving into conflict-related crisis, are in crisis, and are recovering from crisis. Overall, sustained conflicts between factions or fronts based on ethnicity, language group and/or religious affiliation have rarely continue without some sort of external support, both during the Cold War and since. Geopolitics is a significant factor even post-Cold War, especially where scarce natural resources are concerned. Examples include Sudan, Ivory Coast, Zaire and Niger.

Liberation struggles in Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe have also become “proxy wars” where opposing Cold War powers backed one side or the other, provided arms and military forces, applied sanctions, then ultimately participated in or supported peace negotiations. Civil wars, such as those in Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda and the DRC, sometimes called “complex conflict situations” may or may not initially involve external powers, military forces or arms. Sometimes, they are ignored by the “big powers” for critical months or years, until a former metropole or the United Nations helps to negotiate a cease fire or peace accords or—as in the Great Lakes region and Madagascar—where neighboring country and African Union leaders work to achieve negotiated cease fires and peace agreements.

Wars of secession, such as in those between Eritrea and Ethiopia, Northern and Southern Sudan, Senegal and the Casamance region, may and have become civil wars, and in Sudan and Eritrea, among the longest in history. Coups and counter-coups such as in the Mano River states, The Gambia, Nigeria, Ghana, combine state fragility, battles for power over scarce natural resources such as “blood diamonds” and oil with the ambitions of young military officers who have been close enough to power and wealth that they seek even closer and more permanent access. They are also affected by the concerns of Northern states about access to these resources.

Nevertheless, in all of these types of conflicts, various kinds of mediation are tried within and between the warring factions or fronts, usually by civilians aware that conflict is brewing or spreading, and by other indigenous actors before, during and after crises.

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GENDER ISSUES AND GENDER RELATIONS IN AFRICAN STATES AND SOCIETIES IN CONFLICT

Gender is a crosscutting theme for USAID in its new strategic analysis and programming for all countries, and particularly for African fragile states. A recent summary states that:

“Gender inequality directly and indirectly limits economic growth in Africa and gender inequality in access to and control of a wide range of economic, human, and social capital assets and resources is a core dimension of poverty in the region. Problems extend to rising violence against women and girls, trafficking in human persons and discriminatory legal codes. As a result of national political violence and conflicts, women and children are growing among the numbers of displaced [and] refugees and those whose lives are otherwise disrupted by conflicted communities. Because women are not widely represented in local and national governments, they have little opportunity to hold leadership positions to affect change” (USAID Strategic Framework for Africa, May 11, 2005 draft).

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Many of the sources gathered and annotated here stress differences between how women and men, girls and boys are affected by and affect war and peace-making. Others, however, view questions of gender or reflect gender analysis viewed through a broader lens. The latter attempt to assess how socially and culturally structured private and public power relationships between women and men, adults and children in a variety of African social systems may initially help to determine--and then be changed as a result of--local and wider-scale conflict and crisis. In addition, they report on internal and externally assisted efforts to realign gender relations and gender roles during the peace-making process, and as the countries emerge from conflict and move toward a new “normalcy”.

See especially Byrne, B., Marcus, R. and Powers-Stevens, T., 1995. Gender, Conflict and Development. Volume 2P Case Studies: Cambodia, Rwanda, Kosovo, Somalia, Algeria, Guatemala and Eritrea BRIDGE Report 35, Brighton: BRIDGE/Institute of Development Studies
www.ids.ac.uk/bridge/Reports/re35c.pdf

GENDER AND CONFLICT MITIGATION AND RESOLUTION PRE-CRISIS

When it becomes clear that governance systems are not working, or when a group or several groups begin to reflect their dissatisfaction or desires for positive change through violent means, efforts are usually made to resolve the conflict before it spreads and reaches a crisis stage. As virtually all of the sources referred to here attest, women are most frequently involved in such efforts, and often initiate them through informal and traditional means, but increasingly using more modern communication technologies and eventually accessing outside audiences. On the other hand, men too attempt and manage reconciliation and conflict resolution processes, either separately (traditional leaders and influentials), or together with women, just as women may be the instigators of violent solutions, separately or together with men.

Regarding indigenous conflict resolution methods and case studies, see especially Toolbox 4: Indigenous Conflict Management Mechanisms (Community-Based/Traditional/Indigenous Mediation; Community-Based Conflict Mitigation: Grassroots Approaches to Peace; Tsjeard Bouta and Georg Frerks. June 2002/ Women's Roles in Conflict Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Literature Review and Institutional Analysis http://www.clingendael.nl/cru/publications/publications_occ_papers.htm and www.raisingvoices.org/declaration.shtml

GENDER AND CONFLICT IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

Among the many issues and actions that in part arise from and affect gender relationships and persons of both sexes and all ages are the terms of engagement in conflict situations. When there appear no longer to be terms of engagement, and all civilians are “fair game” for conscription, forced relocation, imprisonment, torture, disappearance and death, countries are at the extreme end of crisis any crisis continuum, and it is likely that existing governance systems are so fragile as to be ineffective or even counter-productive, in that the State will pursue the conflict rather than engage in negotiations.

CHILD SOLDIERS, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

It is in these instances that women and girls, as well as boys and youths, may face the most traumatizing, horrifying and terminal effects. Most of the resources covered here demonstrate that women and girls, as well as boy children and youths, are at extreme risk of conflict-related violence based on their sex and age. That is, those who are most vulnerable are those whose female sexual identity makes them subjects for rape, forced pregnancy, conscription to fight with militias or state military forces as child soldiers, or accompany them as sex slaves who may also be trafficked across borders, or killed. Boys are also subject to sexual abuse, forced conscription as child soldiers, drugged, brainwashed, forced to commit violent acts against “the enemy” but also against each other, trafficked, and of course, killed. In some conflicts that last a long time, they become the “next generation” of “adult” soldiers and militia continuing the conflict.

See especially Banya, Kingsley and Juliet Elu, 2004. *The Dilemma of Child Soldiering in Sub-Saharan Africa* in *Advances in Education in Diverse Communities: Research, Policy and Praxis*, Vol. 4, 170-208; Hobson Matt, 1994 *Forgotten Casualties of War: Girls in Armed Conflict*. London: Save the Children. <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/temp/scuk/cache/cnsattach/2696>

McKay, S. and D. Maurana. March 2004. *Where are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After the War*. International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD). <http://www.siyanda.org/search/summary.cfm?nn=1366&ST=SS&Keywords=conflict&SUBJECT=0&Donor=0&StartRow=1&Ref=Sim>

Gender-based violence (GBV) though often formally illegal, is culturally accepted in many societies with particularly patriarchal social structures before conflict. However, studies have shown that where there was greatest tolerance of GBV pre-conflict, there is usually a higher incidence of conflict-related and exacerbated GBV.

When there appear no longer to be terms of engagement ... all civilians are “fair game” for conscription, forced relocation, imprisonment, torture, disappearance and death.

See Vann, B. 2002, *Gender-Based Violence: Emerging Issues in Programs Serving Displaced Populations*, Arlington: John Snow, Inc. (JSI) Research and Training Institute and the Reproductive Health for Refugees Consortium.
http://www.rhrc.org/pdf/gbv_vann.pdf

Women in Law and Development in Africa. August 2004. *West African NGOs Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action*. Women in Law and Development in Africa.
<http://www.siyanda.org/search/summary.cfm?nn=1601&ST=SS&Keywords=conflict&SUBJECT=0&Donor=0&StartRow=1&Ref=Sim>

The Reproductive Health Response in Conflict (RHRC) Consortium. January 2004. *Gender-based Violence in Populations Affected by Armed Conflict: A Field Guide for Displaced Settings*. The Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium.
http://www.siyanda.org/newadditions/2005-04-14-1643-Gender-Based_Violence_in_Popul.htm

Trafficking in persons (TIP) has recently become a much more broadly recognized phenomenon in Africa as in the rest of the world, especially where there have been intra-state conflicts and large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, as well as significant numbers of child soldiers. TIP is being monitored by the USG, and is one criterion on the basis of which USG assistance can be suspended. TIP projects are on going in several countries, and TIP prevention is an element emphasized in the AFR Fragile States Strategic Framework. There are examples of best practices in assisting those who may be, or have been, trafficked in the *Annotated Bibliography* and the *Gender and Conflict Best Practices Report*.

See especially, *Literature Review and Analysis Related to Human Trafficking in Post-Conflict Situations*. June 2004
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/crosscutting_programs/wid/pubs/trafficking_dai_lit_review.pdf

Many IDPs, like many refugees, often return during or immediately post-conflict with no support from external sources. However, many more remain encamped or temporarily relocated in urban centers with minimal or more often no external support.

GENDER ISSUES IN PROTECTION AND RESETTLEMENT OF IDPS AND REFUGEES

Refugees--defined as those who have crossed an international border as a result of conflict, political persecution or natural disaster--are covered by several international conventions, and there tend to be more funds available for their care, maintenance and resettlement post-conflict than are available for the care, maintenance and resettlement of IDPs. OCHA's definition of IDPs is "persons or groups who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights...and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border (UN OCHA, 1998. *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*). Worldwide, there are 25 million IDPs, and this number has recently been increased by those displaced by the conflict in Darfur, Sudan.

Many IDPs, like many refugees, often return during or immediately post-conflict with no support from external sources. However, many more remain encamped or temporarily relocated in urban centers (such as Khartoum and Nairobi) with minimal or more often no external support. Gender issues for IDPs and their protection are many and profound. In camps, women and girls are usually not involved in distribution of food and other goods. Frequently, they are required to

have a ration card with a man's name on it. Often, they are not given the rations to which they are entitled--with or without a card--since frequently they lack any documentation and are not with any male kin or in-laws. Thus, they may have to exchange sex for food. Alternatively, they may be intimidated or beaten to give up to men those rations they do get.

Since it is women who leave the camps to carry out “traditional roles” such as fetching water and gathering fuel wood, or cultivating crops, they are the ones frequently attacked by combatants outside the camps. Within camps, they are often subject to GBV from guards, male IDPs, and sometimes from militias who are encamped with them. ICRC, Mercy Corps, CRS, IRC and other international organizations and NGOs have begun to implement programs for women and girls in IDP and refugee camps that are very promising and could be replicated elsewhere if funds were available. These projects involve the beneficiaries in design and implementation, emphasizing agency and skills development rather than treating the beneficiaries as passive victims.

See especially, <http://www.db.idpproject.org>; <http://www.icrc.org/eng/women>; Sommers, Marc. 2002. “Children, Education and War: Reaching Education For All (EFA) Objectives in Countries Affected by Conflict”. *Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit Working Papers*. Paper No. 1. World Bank: Washington, DC.

A key issue that constrains resettlement of all IDPs and refugees, but especially women, widows, and girls and boys captured by militias, is the availability of land and land-use rights. Often, others have settled the land they have left, and when they are able to return, there may be no mechanisms available to give them any priority in re-claiming land to which they had use-rights before leaving. Pre-conflict systems of gender and inheritance rights also complicate matters in many societies, where women have no *de facto* inheritance rights to land except through men. Post-conflict, their connection with these men—husbands, fathers, sons, uncles--may no longer exist or where they exist, they may not be observed due to ostracism of unmarried mothers, women and children who are handicapped, or competition from other women who have married men who did not leave with the relocating women. This issue also affects women ex-combatants, as will be discussed below under DDRR.

See, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children
<http://www.womenscommission.org>.

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GENDER ISSUES IN DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION REINTEGRATION AND RECONCILIATION (DDRR)

Many resources on gendered approaches to the various phases of DDRR are included in the Annotated Bibliography, here in the list of key Web sites, and in the Best Practices document. A significant number of them provide analyses of the particular problems facing women and girls, orphans and other vulnerable children—whether ex-combatants or not--as well as case studies and recommendations. Vanessa Farr's *Gendering Demilitarization as a Peacebuilding Tool* (2002. Bonn: BICC, Paper 20) provides both an excellent overview and a step-by-step set of recommendations, with an annex giving an inclusive checklist of actions

to be taken at each stage of the DDDR process to ensure that women and girls are not left out--whether they are formally recognized ex-combatants or not.

The UN Security Council's landmark **Resolution 1325** on women, peace, and security (October 2000), points up the need to consider the differences in the requirements of female and male ex-combatants and their dependents in DDR initiatives. Nonetheless, women ex-combatants, girls and boys who accompanied combatants and former child soldiers often become literally or figuratively "invisible" during the DDDR process because they demobilize first, are not included in the lists of those to receive compensation, seed packs, clothing, training, or to participate in various projects to foster reintegration. IDPs who were not in camps, but rather who congregated in large numbers in urban centers—and who may never have been either registered or even enumerated—are often ignored by DDDR programs, especially if they are women. Many such women must resort to commercial sex work, or seek out local protectors who may also serve as pimps. This was almost a stereotype for Ethiopian and Eritrean women refugees and IDPs in Khartoum in the 1970s and 1980s, many of whom had literally walked from their homes to Sudan's capital.

Key exceptions occur where international agencies and others involved in formal and informal negotiations seek out these potentially "invisible" groups, carry out gender assessments that also take age and prior social and economic status into account, and when project designers use participatory appraisal methods to find out what potential beneficiaries perceive their needs to be. In most instances where this has occurred, women's networks have been critically involved in advocacy, awareness raising, and lobbying for inclusion and rights. Rwanda after the genocide is perhaps the best-studied example of the effectiveness of such women's organizational networks in DDDR, although Sudan and other countries still in--or just beginning to emerge from--conflict have also benefited from the work of such women's networks.

See particularly, Nur, I., 2002, Gender-sensitive Programme Design and Planning in Conflict-affected Situations – Annex 5: Somalia Case Study, London: ACORD

<http://www.acord.org.uk/Publications/G&CResearch/annex5somaliaeng.pdf>

Nyirankundabera, J., 2002, Gender-sensitive Programme Design and Planning in Conflict-affected Situations – Annex 6: Complementary Studies: Rwanda, Newbury, Catharine, and Hannah Balwin. July 2000 Aftermath: Women's Organizations in Postconflict Rwanda. Working Paper No. 34. Washington: USAID/CDIE.

<http://www.dec.org/pdf%5Fdocs/PNACJ324.pdf>

London: ACORD; www.womenwagingpeace.net; <http://www.unhcr.ch> for People Oriented Planning; United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). 2002. Gender Approaches in Conflict and Post-conflict Situations.

www.undp.org/erd/ref/gendermanualfinal.pdf

Women ex-combatants, girls and boys who accompanied combatants and former child soldiers often become literally or figuratively "invisible" during the DDDR process.

GENDER ISSUES AND GENDER RELATIONS IN RECONSTRUCTION

The list of key Web sites that follows this text, as well as the Annotated Bibliography, provide many references and resources about peace-making, women participating in track 1 or track 2 negotiations and development of the content of

peace accords, as well as women's organizations and networks monitoring the peace, and contributing to post-conflict reconstruction.

While many women and girls have learned new skills, and adopted new and more empowered roles during the height of a conflict, as the country emerges from conflict, even women ex-combatants on the winning side may be expected to return home and to give up these skills and become "normal" women again, staying at home, raising children, supporting husbands, sons, fathers and in-laws. One of the most studied examples is that of the women ex-combatants in Eritrea, who participated valiantly with men and boys in the winning Front, holding military rank, engaging in combat as well as in support roles. When Independence from Ethiopia was finally won, they were supposed to go home and disappear from politics and the public arena. Though some of these women refused to take up pre-conflict stereotyped gender roles, the majority appears to have succumbed to the pressure to do so from their male former "comrades" in arms.

As is noted in the Best Practices document, post-conflict, women who have been independent, activist and survived the conflict are often subject to a cultural and political "backlash" even where they have won the peace, and been involved in peace negotiations. The Mano Women's Peace Network is a good example of how sheer determination of a group of women peacemakers from Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia were able to have a major impact on the peace process and women's subsequent roles. Where access to resources is limited, especially to training, jobs, income-generating opportunities and education, these women, as well as orphans, and former child soldiers are competing with many men for a minimum quality of life, and may already be suffering from stigma and discrimination even before the conflict has ended.

See, <http://www.caii.com> Conflict Prevention Toolkit; El-Bushra, Judy; Asha El-Karib, Angela Hadjipateras. 2002. Gender Sensitive Program Design and Planning in Conflict-affected Situations. ACORD.
<http://www.acord.org.uk/b-resources.htm#GENDER>

See also <http://www.everydaygandhis.com>, esp. Article 7/22/05 by Lane Clark, "Liberia: Signs of hope on a muddy road."

HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health. In Africa, women are HIV positive in a ratio of about 3:1 with men. The feminization of the pandemic in Africa has been swift and brutal. It has also taken place in a period where localized conflicts and major wars have been common and are continuing. In addition to the extremely negative health impacts of GBV, gang-rape, mutilation, enforced drug use, commercial sex work and sexual slavery, conflict-affected women are disproportionately PLWHA and PAHA. For those who are living alone or more often, with their children, access to health and economic resources as well as psychosocial support may be extremely minimal. More likely, stigma and discrimination as well as ignorance of their high-risk status will have kept these women from trying to access whatever testing, care and treatment services may be available. This is also true for men and boys, but affects larger numbers of women. Some innovative programs in a few countries have addressed this problem, as well as the broader one of reproductive health among women in conflict and post-conflict situations. IOM's regional office based in Kenya is one example of an international organization working in this area.

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An interesting two-year study by UNFPA/UNDP led to a series of projects designed to work with the military to make them more aware of reproductive health issues, HIV/AIDS, other STDs, and to provide them with condoms. Other programs have used male ex-combatants as health workers with considerable success, and yet others have had success in training women and girls as health workers and traditional birth attendants (TBAs).

See http://unfpa.org/rh/armed_frces/index.html

Benjamin, J and K. Fancy, 2001. *Conflict, post-conflict and HIV/AIDS – The Gender Connections: Women, War and HIV/AIDS West Africa and the Great Lakes*
www.worldbank.org/html/prmgge/womensmonth/benjamin.doc, <http://www.iom.org>.

Psychosocial Issues. All those who have survived conflict of any duration are likely to be traumatized, but there are degrees, and symptoms differ. Those who have been most directly involved in combat; who have been abducted by combatants; whose home places have been demolished; whose children have been violated and killed in front of them; those who have suffered rape, gang-rape, or torture; those who have been subjected to forced drug abuse and indoctrination at the hands of soldiers, guards, civilians; those who have been trafficked for sex work or domestic slavery—all these are likely to suffer from severe and lasting trauma or post-traumatic stress syndrome. Many never fully recover. Among these categories of persons, women, girls and children are the majority in each conflict situation. Boys are also affected, and this is one reason why male former child soldiers are likely to be re-recruited—they have nothing else to keep them alive, and have become completely oblivious to any authority but that of the military with whom they served.

Girls and women have individually and collectively demonstrated a nearly unbelievable ability to overcome all of these traumas, often through networking with and supporting each other. Where they have been reached early with income-generating opportunities, skills training, leadership training, programs providing shelter or the ability to construct it, access to literacy and numeracy training, basic education for their surviving children, traumatized girls and women have shown remarkable abilities to cope even under continuing adverse circumstances. Orphans, ex-child soldiers and other youth are able to relate to each other, and can become junior facilitators, members of group homes, and can be reintegrated into communities through creative use of traditional approaches to forgiveness through cleansing rituals of various kinds.

See, Söderberg Jacobson, Agneta. 2004. *Rethink! A Handbook for Sustainable Peace*. Stockholm Sweden: Kvinna Till Kvinna Foundation.
<http://www.iktk.se/publikationer/rapporter/pdf/Rethink.pdf>

Rehn, E. and E.J. Sirleaf. October 2002. *Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts: Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace-Building*. New York: UNIFEM.
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Girls and women ... demonstrate a nearly unbelievable ability to overcome ... traumas, often through networking with and supporting each other. Where they have been reached early ... traumatized girls and women have shown remarkable abilities to cope even under continuing adverse circumstances.

GENDER ISSUES AND WOMEN'S ROLES IN PEACE BUILDING:

Of all the resources reviewed during the AFR Gender and Conflict Research project, there are more available on the role of women in the peace process than on any other single topic. This is reflected in the list of Web sites that follows the text, and in all the other documents produced to date under the project.

Some of the best sources are those that document ongoing activities of national and international women's peace networks (see Web site list). The range of examples extends from situations in which women's efforts to wage peace were systematically ignored (the Mano River Women's situation), through those where women's networks, using face-to-face communication, IT, various local and international media and platforms, were able to work effectively at the local level, to those where women joined in the official negotiating and/or observing commission. Further, there are many examples of instances where these same networks—some of which have added new women's networks and international development bodies to their umbrellas—have gone on to assure that gender concerns and an understanding of the variety and diversity of needs, hopes and rights of people of both sexes and different ages and experiences of conflict, will be taken into account.

Not all of these examples show unmitigated success. Many show how women's groups and women's networks have won and lost over time.

See, for example, Eno, J. 2000. Women's Strategies for Peace: Gains and Losses in Sierra Leone, in Report on the Workshop on Conflict Transformation in Africa: African Women's Perspectives. London: International Alert and African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD). 23-26 May 2000.
<http://www.international-alert.org/pdf/pubgl/workshop.pdf>

Not all the wars are won, and many African countries are still plagued by intra-state conflicts. Women are still hard at work winning the peace, and are making a difference.

See, for example, Women Waging Peace. No date. *Peace in Sudan: Women Making the Difference*.
http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/Peace_Negotiations/VVWPSudanRecs2004.pdf

For peace to be sustained the root causes and triggers of the conflict to be eliminated or at least mitigated, and stronger societies and states to emerge, better understanding of gender relations and differences, and the application of hard-won and improved models for gender equity, are essential.

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KEY GENDER AND CONFLICT WEB SITES

Accord—an international review of peace initiatives

<http://www.c-r.org/accord/index.shtml>

Working collaboratively with locally based organizations, the Accord Program provides in-depth research and analysis of particular issues regarding the peace process. The reports generated by this project are geared towards: documenting peace processes and initiatives and the sources and dynamics of particular conflicts; increasing public access, both locally and internationally to the understanding of peace processes and peace agreements; and promoting learning, domestically and internationally from past and comparable peace making experiences. The publication series has each issue set within a broader project around the chosen theme. Past issues have analyzed: engaging armed groups; Angola; public participation; Northern Uganda; and Sierra Leone, among others.

American Refugee Committee

<http://www.arc.org>

The American Refugee Committee is an international nonprofit, nonsectarian organization that has provided humanitarian aid and training to millions of beneficiaries over the past 25 years. The American Refugee Committee works for the survival, health and well being of refugees, displaced people, and those at risk, enabling them to rebuild productive lives of dignity and purpose, striving always to respect their values. ARC insists on involving the people they serve in the planning and implementation of their efforts. This participatory approach is critical to the sustainability of their programs.

Clingendael

<http://www.clingendael.nl/cru/>

The Clingendael Research Unit (CRU) is part of the Clingendael research department. The unit focuses on the study of intrastate conflict and on ways of preventing and dealing with these conflicts. The research group works in a number of practice areas and in 2001-2002 conducted a study of 'Gender and Armed Conflict' that was commissioned by the Directorate 'Coordination Emancipation Policy' of the Netherlands Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. It consists of three phases. The first phase comprises a study of relevant literature on the dynamic role and position of 'local' women in conflict situations and on the ways gender relations are impacted by internal conflict. The second phase examines how a number of selected agencies (e.g. UNDP, DPKO, OSCE, WFP, ICRC) working in conflict to integrate a gender perspective in their policy practice, by looking at, among others, their mandates, structures, policies, operational procedures and policy implementation as well as assessing the available gender expertise. The third phase will suggest means and instruments to strengthen the gender perspective of these organizations in order to actually improve the position of women in conflict situations.

Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS)

<http://www.fasngo.org/en/activities/advocacy/lala.htm>

Through its lobbying and advocacy activities, Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS) implements a forceful strategy to mobilize, articulate and represent women's interests and concerns. It aims to promote gender issues as central to policy development and legislation at the national, regional and international levels. At the regional level, for example, FAS's advocacy program resulted in gender parity in the African Union Commission and the adoption of the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights. FAS also publishes Advocacy News, a newsletter published in English. As an advocacy tool, it analyses and reports on the role of women in peace initiatives and monitors progress in gender, peace, development and related issues in Africa, highlighting the contribution of African women leaders in the peace process.

FEMNET – The African Women's Development and Communication Network

www.femnet.or.ke

FEMNET was set up in 1988 to share information, experiences, ideas and strategies among African women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) through communications, networking, training and advocacy to advance women's development, equality and other women's human rights in Africa. FEMNET aims to strengthen the role and contribution of African NGOs focusing on women's development, equality and other human rights. It also aims to provide an infrastructure for and a channel through which these NGOs can reach one another and share information, experiences and strategies to as to improve their input into women's development, equality and other women's human rights in Africa. FEMNET works throughout Africa and concentrates its activities in four primary programs: advocacy, training, communications/information, and engaging the Commission on the Status of Women.

Gender and Peace building Working Group, Canadian Peace building Coordinating Committee

<http://www.peacebuild.ca/working/?load=gender>

GPWG goals include focus on achieving progress in translating the general international commitments that have been made on gender equality and peace building into concrete actions in specific situations and to promote the active participation and recognition of the contribution women have made to human security and peace building.

GPWG activities include: raising public awareness about how age and gender can determine how people are affected by conflict and how their needs and priorities vary in peace building and post-conflict reconstruction; building political support for the contribution women make to building peace and encourage their equitable and effective participation and integration into national, regional and international fora; advocating for the integration of a gender perspective in Canada's foreign policy agenda, particularly in: conflict prevention, human security during conflict, conflict resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction and reintegration; engaging and maintaining dialogue with members of parliament, government officials and members of the Canadian Committee on Women Peace and Security; maintaining a list-serv on relevant issues; publishing and disseminating documents and research on issues related to gender and peace building; supporting capacity strengthening of member organizations.

Human Rights Watch

http://hrw.org/doc/?t=women_pub

The Women's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch fights against the dehumanization and marginalization of women. Promoting women's equal rights and human dignity. HRW conducts research specifically on the links between women, armed conflict, and international justice. In Africa they have produced in-depth reports on the conflicts in Sudan, Congo, Burundi, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda.

IDP Project and Database of the Norwegian Refugee Council in cooperation with UN OCHA

<http://www.idpproject.org>

The Geneva-based Global IDP Project was established by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in 1996, mainly in response to growing information needs related to internal displacement. The outbreak of numerous new conflicts in the early 1990s had led to a sharp increase in the number of internally displaced people, but only fragmented information existed about their assistance and protection needs. In a first attempt to close this information gap, the Norwegian Refugee Council in 1998 published the first-ever global survey of internal displacement.

At the same time, the Global IDP Project entered into discussions with the United Nations on the creation of an electronic archive on internal displacement. In late 1998 the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee endorsed the outsourcing of the development of an IDP database to the NRC, with the objective of creating an authoritative information source on internal displacement. Based on this mandate, the NRC's Global IDP Project developed an integrated online information system, which was launched in December 1999. During the following years, the Global IDP Project further expanded the database, developed a [training programme](#) on the Guiding Principles, and established itself as an important [advocate](#) for the rights of internally displaced people.

Indigenous Knowledge – World Bank Website

<http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/>

The Indigenous Knowledge (IK) Program's website opens a gateway to different sources on IK. It aims to facilitate a multilateral dialogue between local communities, NGOs, governments, donors, civil society and the private sector. The ultimate objective of the website is to help mainstream indigenous/traditional knowledge into the activities of development partners and to optimize the benefits of development assistance, especially to the poor. These goals are being achieved through different strategies. They include a database on indigenous/traditional knowledge and practices with over 300 case studies and a series of "IK Notes" which present in some detail, locally driven solutions to complex issues. The Program also supports over 15 resource centers across Africa that focus on identification and dissemination of indigenous/traditional knowledge and practices. Working with governments and local partners, the Program has also begun to help mainstream the application of IK in World Bank projects and in national development programs.

International Alert

<http://www.international-alert.org/women/>

International Alert's Gender and Peace building Program has evolved out of their global campaign, *Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to the Negotiating Table*. Informed by discussions with partners, policy makers and others, the program has now shifted its focus and direction from overtly campaigning on women's issues to more of a focus on gender dynamics.

The program is comprised of two interlinked and interdependent projects - the Gender Peace Audit that works at the local, national and regional level and the Global Policy Project that focuses on the international and regional policy level. These two projects work in synergy to promote gender sensitive and gender aware policies rooted in local realities.

The International Committee of the Red Cross

<http://www.icrc.org/eng/women>

ICRC has a series of programs focusing on "Prevention and Protection" that attempt to both prevent conflict and provide resources to ensure the security of vulnerable people such as women, children and IDPs throughout the world. The programs include: conducting sessions with armed forces and armed opposition groups around the world in which messages about the needs of women and the prohibition of sexual violence are integrated; visiting persons deprived of their freedom in relation to armed conflict. The organization supports psychosocial workshops for families of the missing and provides them with material or administrative assistance; developing strategies for providing medical and psychological care for victims of sexual violence, including those that are difficult to reach because of the taboo and shame associated with sexual violence; providing support by devising appropriate programs which will help women regain autonomy and dignity; ensuring that women have the same access as men to physical rehabilitation programs.

Isis – Women's Intl Cross cultural exchange

<http://www.isis.or.ug/about.htm>

Isis – WICCE relocated to Kampala, Uganda at the end of 1993 with an objective of tapping African women's ideas, views and problems and sharing the information with women at the international level. Since the move to Kampala, Isis-WICCE started National-and regional level programs to facilitate the flow of information from Uganda to other parts of Africa and the rest of the world, and to contribute towards the strengthening of the Uganda and African women's movement. The program's activities include: Documenting, repackaging and disseminating issue oriented information to different target groups as a means of addressing injustices; adopting innovative means of information sharing and capacity building to promote gender equality and redress violations committed against women; influencing policy makers and civil society about gender sensitivity and self determination of women; cultivating mutually beneficial networking relationships with other organizations at the national, regional and international level; enabling women to deliberate together and work towards building a culture of peace.

Mano River Women's Peace Network

<http://www.marwopnet.org/welcome.htm>

Since its creation, MARWOPNET has participated in ECOWAS summits and the African Union to revive African leaders' interest in the unfortunate dramas experienced by women and children of the Mano River basin as well as their commitment to invest in a rapid resolution of these conflicts. The network organized many workshops to reinforce capacities, raise funds and lobby network members as well as those of civil society organizations in light of their implication in the peace process of the West African sub-region. MARWOPNET promotes social mobilization and awareness-raising initiatives geared to civil populations.

Complementing initiatives include regular meetings with development partners; political, religious and traditional leaders. The network also attracts the attention of political and administrative and organizational leaders on issues and obstacles in reconciliation and reconstruction in the Mano River Union basin.

Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe

<http://www.profemme.org.rw/home.htm>

Through "promoting a culture of peace" Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe attempts to intensify Peace Action Campaigns (CAP) actions through different organizations and grassroots groups, start CAP activities in areas not yet covered, continue synergies at national level and partners involved in the preparation of national policy in peace education field, prepare Pan-African Conference activities, promote inter-relationships with programs considered as concrete actions that CAP has highlighted, and involve the program in the country's sector based policies, promote justice, security and equality. Other components of the program include providing training and education to women to increase their intervention capacity, advocating for the inclusion of women in housing (re) construction processes, and increasing the economic empowerment of women through the provision of credit and training.

Raising Voices

www.raisingvoices.org/declaration.shtml

Raising Voices is a registered non-profit project of the Tides Center working to create and promote community-based approaches to preventing violence against women and children. The organization advocates for and supports the development of sustainable programs working to prevent domestic violence in communities in East and Southern Africa.

They have developed a number of resources to aid in programming that include violence prevention tools, a resource guide, technical support and partnerships, and regional dialogue. Raising Voices also aims to influence practice by engaging policy makers, organizations and other stakeholders in a dialogue on how they conceptualize violence programming. Through this program they work to build infrastructure in the region for increased interest and investment of resources for violence prevention initiatives.

Reproductive Health Response in Conflict (RHRC)

www.rhrc.org

The Reproductive Health Response in Conflict (RHRC) Consortium is dedicated to the promotion of reproductive health among all persons affected by armed conflict. The RHRC Consortium promotes sustained access to comprehensive, high quality reproductive health programs in emergencies and advocates for policies that support reproductive health of persons affected by armed conflict. Its areas of expertise are: service provision to expand and improve reproductive health services for refugee women, men and adolescents; promoting the inclusion of reproductive health as part of the initial and ongoing needs assessments in emergency and stable refugee situations; designing monitoring and evaluation methods for reproductive health projects in refugee settings; training to promote the use of existing training modules and develop, adapt and test new modules to improve reproductive health education and services; and research to pursue a select research agenda to improve service delivery and funding for refugee reproductive health; operating a small grants program; to advocate improved reproductive health services among agencies funding or providing assistance to refugees; and to document and disseminate information on reproductive health in refugee settings to refugee communities, field staff, managers, policy makers and donors.

Siyanda

<http://www.siyanda.org/index.htm>

Siyanda aims to bring growing resources to support practitioners in implementing gender programs and in mainstreaming gender equality concerns, whether they are gender specialists or not. The organization's main objectives are: presenting short summaries of on-line work to save busy practitioners time in searching for relevant information; enabling users to download full-length materials quickly and easily, free of charge; facilitating a culture of sharing information and materials on gender and development among people working in this field; working with partner organizations across the world to build an online space that reflects their interests and needs and that connects them with like-minded colleagues.

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

www.unifem.org

UNIFEM works on several fronts to interrupt the cycle of violence against women, with an overall objective of linking violence to the source that feeds it: gender inequality. UNIFEM multiplies the power of its groundbreaking strategies through advocacy campaigns and close partnerships with governments, women's groups and other branches of the UN system. UNIFEM works in the following areas: promoting protective laws and national actions; collecting data and research on violence against women; supporting prevention initiatives from the local to the international level, including in conflict and post-conflict situations, where violence against women is prevalent and horrific; supporting women's organizations and drawing attention and resources to these efforts; and establishing the Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women that offers grants to innovative projects to prevent violence that are run by community, national and regional organizations. With relatively modest sums, grantees have passed new laws, trained police, and involved men and boys in stopping violence.

United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/>

Aiming to ensure the participation of women as equal partners with men in all aspects of human endeavor, this Division of the UN promotes women as equal participants and beneficiaries of sustainable development, peace and security, governance and human rights. As part of its mandate, it strives to stimulate the mainstreaming of gender perspectives both within and outside the United Nations system. Broken down into six specific strategic objectives that are designed to be applicable on a global scale, the UNDAW aims to: increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation; reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments; promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations; promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace; provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women and provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories.

West African Network for Peace building (WANEP)

<http://www.wanep.org/index.html>

Work began in 1990 to establish a regional network of peacebuilding initiatives in West Africa. This arose as a result of the Liberia civil war, which necessitated the creation of a regional peace intervention force. Religious and civil society groups were mobilized to collectively participate in active peacebuilding. In the northern region of Ghana a consortium of non-governmental organizations with funding support from the British High Commission in Ghana became actively involved in peacebuilding to respond to inter-communal violence that threatened Ghana's stability. A similar experience of cooperative action was witnessed in Sierra Leone in May 1997 when a civil society movement comprising all sectors of that society mobilized against military rule and successfully saw the ousting of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) was born out of these experiences.

After a feasibility study conducted throughout the sub-region, representatives of seven West African countries in 1998 officially launched WANEP in Accra Ghana. Many of the delegates at the launch of WANEP were key actors in the civil society collective actions outlined above. They created WANEP as a mechanism to harness peacebuilding initiatives and to strengthen collective interventions that were already bearing good fruits in Liberia, the Northern Region of Ghana, and Sierra Leone.

Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children

<http://www.womenscommission.org/>

The Women's Commission's Protection and Participation Program works to improve refugee women's protection in war-affected areas overseas and to increase their participation in planning and managing assistance programs. The Commission works in five main areas that address the specific needs of women and children displaced by conflict: the Protection Partners program (monitoring of displaced women and children), working with the UN to ensure the Millennium Development Goals include displaced women and children and are made accountable to displaced populations, conducting assessments of UNHCR, encourage coalition-building of organization to advocate for peace, reconstruction, and security, and supporting displaced women's involvement and ability to speak out and voice their opinions and needs.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

<http://www.peacewomen.org>

Within the overall framework of Building a Culture of Peace, WILPF's main interlinked activities include: To strengthen capacity of women in peace building in national network structures; localize training methodologies through translation into indigenous West African languages; provide a forum for grassroots participation in issues on women, peace and security by airing the 'Voices of Women' radio program; promote women's participation in formal peace building initiatives in West Africa.

Women Waging Peace

<http://www.womenwagingpeace.net>

Women Waging Peace Inclusive Security sector advocates for the full participation of all stakeholders, especially women, in formal and informal peace processes around the world by [building a network](#) of women peacemakers [making the case](#) that women make vital contributions to conflict prevention, peace negotiations, and post-conflict reconstruction efforts; and [shaping public policy](#) by generating support from policymakers for women's agency in promoting security. In Africa, Women Waging Peace manages programs in Burundi, DRC, Eritrea, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Sudan that focus on women's role in conflict prevention, peace negotiations, and post-conflict reconstruction.

Women for Women International

<http://www.womenforwomen.org/ourwork.html>

Working primarily with the DRC, Nigeria, and Rwanda in Africa, Women for Women International utilizes a tiered program that begins with direct financial and emotional support, advocates for awareness of women's rights, offers vocational and business skills training, and provides access to income-generation support and affordable micro credit loans. These programs aim to provide women with the resources necessary to overcome the horrors of war and help them rebuild their lives, families, and communities.

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